

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 0170

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

3MO. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: UR, CH, JA
SUBJECT: CHINESE DIPLOMAT DISCUSSES SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS

REF: MOSCOW 17918

SUMMARY: CHINESE DIPLOMAT HERE STRESSED THAT ANY POSSIBLE
IMPROVEMENT IN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS CANNOT COME AT THE
EXPENSE OF CHINESE INEVITABILITY OF WAR AND ANTI-SOVIET
THREE WORLDS THEORIES. HE CAST BLAME ON THE SOVIET UNION
FOR REFUSING TO MATCH ITS PUBLIC PROTESTATIONS FOR
BETTER RELATIONS WITH ACTUAL DEEDS. WE AGREE THAT
UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES THE SOVIETS APPEAR TO SEE LITTLE
UTILITY IN ATTEMPTING TO IMPROVE SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS.
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DECEMBER SAW UPSWING IN SOVIET PRESS ATTACKS ON CHINA.
END SUMMARY.

1. A JAPANESE DIPLOMATIC SOURCE HAS GIVEN US
FOLLOWING READOUT ON TWO DISCUSSIONS HE HAD WITH
CHINESE DIPLOMAT LI-FENG LIN ON DEC 16 AND DEC 22.
TOPIC OF BOTH CONVERSATIONS WAS CONTINUING STRAIN

IN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS.

2. DURABILITY OF CHINESE THREE WORLDS THEORY: LI EMPHASIZED SEVERAL TIMES THAT CHINA WILL NOT CHANGE ITS INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POLICIES. HE ASSESSED THAT THERE CAN BE NO IMPROVEMENT IN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS IF THE SOVIETS LINK IMPROVEMENT IN STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS WITH CHANGES IN CHINESE ANTI-SOVIET POLICIES. THE THREE WORLDS THEORY IS NOT ONLY IDEOLOGICAL; IT IS PEKING'S "REAL" FOREIGN POLICY AS WELL.

3. SINO-SOVIET PROPAGANDA EXCHANGES: IN PROBABLE REFERENCE TO SOVIET PROPAGANDA RESTRAINING FOLLOWING MAO'S DEATH, LI STATED THAT "PEOPLE IN THE WEST" THINK THAT A SOVIET REDUCTION IN IDEOLOGICAL CRITICISM OF CHINA WOULD LEAD TO BETTER SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS. HOWEVER, HE NOTED, "SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS ARE NOT SO SIMPLE". HE CLAIMED THE SOVIET PROPAGANDA STANCE IS NOT A GOOD INDICATOR OF SOVIET VIEWS AND INTENTIONS IN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS.

(COMMENT: LI WAS PROBABLY REFERRING TO OFT-CITED CHINESE ACCUSATION THAT SOVIETS HAVE TAKEN NO CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS. END COMMENT.) LI ALSO SAID THAT CHINA WILL NOT PERMIT THE SOVIETS TO CONFIDENTIAL

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DECIDE WHEN TO START, REDUCE OR STOP PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS OF DIFFERENCES. HE CRITICIZED THE SOVIETS FOR ORIGINALLY EXPOSING THE SINO-SOVIET IDEOLOGICAL DISPUTE TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD WHEN KHRUSHCHEV UNILATERALLY PROCLAIMED ITS EXISTENCE IN A 1963 OPEN LETTER.

4. SOVIET INTENTIONS: LI STATED HIS OPINION THAT THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP IS RELUCTANT TO CHANGE ITS CURRENT POLICY TOWARD CHINA. HE OPINED THAT A POLITBURO LEVEL DECISION WOULD BE NECESSARY TO CHANGE THE SOVIET POSTURE. THIS POSTURE CONTRASTS WITH SOVIET PUBLIC ASSURANCES THAT MOSCOW IS PREPARED TO IMPROVE RELATIONS ON THE BASIS OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE.

5. SOVIETS TO BLAME FOR POOR SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS: OUR JAPANESE SOURCE PERSISTENTLY PRESSED LI TO EXPLAIN APPARENT INCOSISTENCE BETWEEN PEKING'S INEVITABILITY OF WAR AND ANTI-SOVIET THREE WORLDS THEORY ON ONE HAND AND PEKING'S ANNOUNCED WILL TO IMPROVE SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS ON THE BASIS OF PEACEFUL

COESISTENCE ON THE OTHER. LI
RESPONDED THAT PEACEFUL COESTISTENCE WITH THE USSR IS
NECESSARY SINCE THE CHINESE DONOT WANT WAR WITH
THE USSR. GOOD NEIGHBORLY RELATIONS WITH THE USSR
WOULD BE VENEFICIAL TO CHINA. WHEN THE PRC SAYS
WW III IS INEVITABLE, IT MEANS THAT THE WAR WILL BE
FOUGHT BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE U.S. LI
INSISTED THAT MOSCOW UNWILLINGNESS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS
WITH PEKING IS UNDERSCORED BY ITS REFUSAL TO MATCH
DEEDS WITH WORDS. HE ASKED RHETORICALLY WHY THE
USSR CANNOT IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH PEKING AS IT
DOES WITH WASHINGTON IN DIFFERENT AREAS. THE U.S.
AND SOVIET PRESSES ATTACK EACH OTHER. THE U.S.
AND SOVIET UNION COMPETE FOR INFLUENCE ABROAD. WHY
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SHOULD PRC ANTI-SOVIET POLICIES IN THE HORN, FOR
EXAMPLE, BE ANY LESS TOLERABLE TO MOSCOW? LI ASKED
IF CHINESE RELATIVE WEAKNESS COULD BE THE REASON
WHY THE SOVIET UNION DOES NOT WANT BETTER RELATIONS,
ADDING "IF CHINA BECOMES STRONG, WILL THE SOVIET
UNION SEEK BETTER RELATIONS?"

6. COMMENT: WE AGREE WITH LI'S STATEMENT PARA 4
THAT SOVIET PRIVATE LINE ON IMPROVEMENT IN SINO-
SOVIET RELATIONS IS TOUGHER THAN PUBLIC SOVIET
STANCE (E.G., PERIODIC SOVIET REITERATION OF DESIRE
AND READINESS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS ON THE BASIS OF
PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE). UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, AS REPORTED
REFTEL, THE SOVIETS APPEAR TO SEE LITTLE UTILITY IN ATTEMPTING
TO IMPROVE SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS. MEANWHILE, DECEMBER HAS
WITNESSED AN UPSWING IN STRONG ATTACKS ON CHINA WHICH HAVE BEEN
PARTICULARLY PROMINENT IN THE ACADEMIC JOURNALS (MEZHDUNA-
RODNOYE PRAVO, PROBLEMI DAL'NOGO VOSTOKA, PARTINAYA ZHIZN').
ANTI-PRC ATTACKS ALSO CONTINUE IN THE SOVET CENTRAL PRESS
AND LITERATURNAYA GAZETTA.
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